

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully solicited in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-20 have been amended, with Claims 1, 11, and 20 being independent.

Obtaining Consideration of co-pending application

The Examiner has not considered the co-pending application cited in the February 24, 2004 Information Disclosure Statement because the application number of the co-pending application was not provided. However, at the time the February 24, 2004 Information Disclosure Statement was filed, this co-pending application had not yet received an application number. Since the co-pending application has now been published as U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0230716 on November 18, 2004, it is being cited in the attached Sixth Information Disclosure Statement.

Formal Claim Rejection

Claims 7 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. In response, while not conceding the propriety of the rejection, these claims have been amended to address the points raised by the Examiner. Applicant submits that as amended, these claims now even more clearly satisfy 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. In addition, Claims 1-20 have been amended for reasons unrelated to patentability to improve their form.

Substantive Claim Rejections

Claims 1-3, 11-13 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Zhou et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,010,624). Claims 4, 8-10, 14, 18, and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Zhou et al. Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Wright (U.S. Patent No. 6,754,725).

In response, while not conceding the propriety of the rejections, independent Claims 1, 11, and 20 have been amended. Applicant submits that as amended, these claims are allowable for the following reasons.

Independent Claim 1 relates to an information processing apparatus comprising an external device connection unit configured to connect an external device, a first driver storage unit configured to store a first driver to control the connected external device in a general-purpose manner, a determination unit configured to determine whether or not a second driver to control the connected external device in a device-specific manner exists in the external device, and an acquisition unit configured to, if the determination unit determines that the second driver exists, obtain the second driver from the connected external device.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite an image data storage unit configured to store image data, and a controller for controlling a storage operation of the second driver.

Claim 1 has also been amended to recite that the controller assigns a vacant area in the image data storage unit to a new second driver to be stored, and if there is no vacant area in the image data storage unit, upon a reception of an instruction from an operator of the information processing apparatus to delete the second driver already stored in the image data storage unit, the controller deletes the second driver selected by the operator from the image data storage unit.

By this arrangement, in an information processing apparatus having a memory of very small capacity, a second driver used to control the connected external device in a device-specific manner can be stored in a storage area for image data. In addition, when storing a new second driver, if there is no vacant area in the image data storage unit, the apparatus can facilitate storage of the new second driver by deleting an already-stored second driver in response to an operator instruction.

In contrast, the citations to Zhou et al. and Wright are not understood to disclose or suggest 1) an image data storage unit configured to store image data, and 2) a controller for controlling a storage operation of the second drive that assigns a vacant area in the image data storage unit to a new second driver to be stored, and if there is no vacant area in the image data storage unit, upon a reception of an instruction from an operator of the information processing apparatus to delete the second driver already stored in the image data storage unit, the controller deletes the second driver selected by the operator from the image data storage unit, as recited by amended Claim 1.

Since these citations are not understood to disclose or suggest these two features of amended Claim 1, Claim 1 is not understood to be anticipated by the citations to Zhou et al. and Wright. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of Claim 1 be withdrawn. And since independent Claims 11 and 20 have been amended in a similar manner, they are allowable for similar reasons. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of Claims 11 and 20 also be withdrawn.

The other rejected claims in this application depend from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and, therefore, are submitted to be patentable for at least the

same reasons. In addition, the dependent claims recite features that are patentable in their own right. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully solicited.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the application is now in allowable form. Therefore, early passage to issue is respectfully solicited.

Any fee required in connection with this paper should be charged to Deposit Account No. 06-1205.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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